



Sustainable Solutions
By
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To: Participants of the Riparian Coordination Network Workshop in Reno, 5/15-17.

I have developed an Executive Summary of our Reno meeting to facilitate your rapid sharing of information and outcomes. While we did not reach the desired consensus on actions and strategies, there were areas of broad agreement and excellent work produced by the group. I believe this will enable the Network to strengthen and expand this valuable work in the months and years to come.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Attendance: Approximately 45 people attended all or part of the Workshop. While most were from the three primary agencies in the Network (BLM, FS, NRCS), we also had people representing EPA, National Cattlemen Beef Association, Sierra Club, Aqua-Tex of British Columbia, Northwest Power Planning Commission, Western Governors Association, and Nevada Dept. of Agriculture. The numbers and diversity of attendees provided a strong reflection of the importance of this work.

Key Outcomes - Strong recognition evolved through the meeting that the Initiative is focused on improving conditions of riparian areas and wetlands through the involvement of affected interests. PFC is one tool that helps achieve that outcome. Too many people have seen PFC as the focus in the past, and not the outcomes of using that one tool and others integrated with collaboration and involvement of affected interests.

Another key outcome was the recognition of the crucial nature of expanding the recovery and management of riparian areas and watersheds in the United States and globally. The soils found in our riparian areas and water catchment basins are the largest freshwater storages in a world that is growing critically short of water for drinking and other uses essential to humankind. Restoration and improved management of these areas offer one of the greatest hopes of improved supplies of water worldwide.

Continuation and expansion of Network activities is a vital Federal responsibility that must be met. Renewed and increased support is essential to our future. Our efforts and skills in collaborative processes must be increased if we are to be successful.

Meeting Purpose and Format: The specific purpose was to develop a common vision among the Riparian Coordination Network about the status and future of the *Initiative to Accelerate Cooperative Riparian Restoration and Management* (ACRRM) and to develop strategies and actions to move towards that future. Unwritten purposes included

strengthening the bonds within the network, providing a sense of renewal and re-energizing, and introducing the group to a collaborative approach for their work. The format was highly interactive and collaborative. Each person was provided opportunities throughout the workshop to speak and be listened to with respect during all activities. The collective statements that accompany this summary and also the workshop report reflect the words/thoughts of all participants who chose to speak on the topic. We worked from broad descriptions of the situation through worst and best possible outcomes, through final strategies and actions, from general to specific. The following summaries represent key beliefs or themes of the group, stated in the words of the participants themselves. The complete Collective Statements from which these were taken are attached. *Italicized words were added for clarity and connection.*

Best Possible Outcomes

The “Best Possible Outcomes” for the future of the Network and the Initiative were developed by addressing the following question: “What is the Best Possible Outcome for investing time and money Accelerating Cooperative Riparian Restoration?”

PFC is a common tool in the early stages of locally led watershed planning; more agencies and groups join the effort.

Most people understand how riparian areas function and make decisions for sustainability of healthy streams and wetlands.

Riparian areas are recognized for their full range of values and are restored to their PFC across the Nation

Riparian restoration is effective, widespread & self-sustaining

A comprehensive approach to riparian restoration and recovery is developed, understood and supported by our institutions and publics *and provides* established long-term protocols that ensure continuation of riparian restoration efforts at all levels: field →international

***There are* long-term benefits to affected natural resources, “local” socioeconomic situations and inter/intra agency/public relations fostering successes of other resource concerns.**

Most or many riparian areas are eventually restored and/or maintained at optimal levels; social commitment has evolved/developed to insure continued future success.

***There will be* many successes, lessons from failures, “can do” attitude, *and a* sense of community in tackling resource management and other problems; development of a land ethic, functioning and resilient streams, watersheds and communities.**

.....In wildlife is the preservation of the world.

These Best Possible Outcomes were then used as the foundation for the development of Strategies and Actions. They are similar to a vision or mission statement, except those are usually condensed to the point where they may not reflect the words or values of all those who brought them into being. The collective statements reflect what each participant said, and his/her own vision for the future. *Italicized words* in collective statements were added for connection and clarity.

The long-term strategies, and also the near term actions, evolved through an iterative process of moving from the very broad to the more specific, and included numerous dialogues and opportunities to review the collective work of the group. While they are not a consensus product, they had the benefit of a winnowing process that is highly transparent in the workshop report.

Long Term Strategies

The final set of long term strategies were developed the final morning, in response to the question: "What longer term strategies/actions does this group believe will help people nationally and globally to keep our water on the land longer?" Responses were grouped by the following themes:

PROGRAM FUTURE

There is a Need to provide continued assistance to make sure that the program continues and to Expand activities geographically

EDUCATION

EDUCATION – we need to emphasize our freshwater vulnerability and our ties to the watershed

DEALING WITH THE GLOBAL CRISIS

Economic stability precedes ecological stability.

COLLABORATION

Actively seek out watershed group efforts to interface w/ and participate in

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

We should feature ACR/WRM that is watershed based with modular implementation.

ECONOMIC VIABILITY

Work to insure Economic viability of resource industries.

P = Partnerships

F = Friends and Families

C = Community

Economic viability of restoration *is important.*

NEAR TERM ACTIONS

The final group of short-term actions were developed in response to the following:
“Based on the collective statements and our discussion, what are the critical actions that we support as a group to take in the near term to help our creeks and communities?”

STRENGTHENING THE NETWORK EFFORTS

Develop interagency/interest group coalitions to discuss collaborative efforts to maintain or receive buy-in from agency heads. Work with interagency and publics to begin (*the initiative*) again.

Do what’s needed to get each state cadre what they need so that part of the “education” continues.

Forest Service - Provide support for FS employees to be active members of State cadres.

COLLABORATION

Reach out to managers, user groups and local watershed groups by building relationships, providing education and demonstrating a willingness to listen.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Focus the discussion from this workshop into a do-able action plan with emphasis to on-the-ground results.

Develop/refine a long term communications strategy for the ACRRM to reach our internal and external audiences.

Keep spreading the word of ACRRM and PFC via workshops targeted toward private landowners.

WATERSHED APPROACH

Coordinate watershed restoration efforts.

OTHER

***I recommend* That each person do what Russ did: Decide what we as individuals can do first on a broad scale, and secondly on a local scale to further A.C.R/WR&M .**

The full collective statements for each of these important products are attached. The participants worked hard, listened with respect to each other, and developed some cohesive and far-reaching suggestions for moving ahead with restoring and better managing our important riparian and wetland areas. It was a privilege to work with this dedicated group of Network professionals and the other committed people who joined us.

/s/Mike

Mike Lunn

Attachments:

Best Possible Outcomes, long term strategies, near term actions

COLLECTIVE STATEMENT ON BEST POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

“What is the Best Possible Outcome for investing time and money Accelerating Cooperative Riparian Restoration?”

PFC is a common tool in the early stages of locally led watershed planning.

More agencies and groups join the effort. Expanded cadres/teams actively promote understanding of stream functions. Increased understanding leads to more and better watershed based planning and implementation. Agencies, private groups and individuals approach riparian/wetland ecosystems in a common understood manner. A paradigm shift to less structures and wiser land use *develops*. Urban dwellers become aware of the role of riparian areas. Entire communities become involved in positive riparian management, Identifying and meeting of riparian objectives that will fulfill the values of the community and if not a consensus with others, values at least a real understanding.

Most people understand how riparian areas function and make decisions for sustainability of healthy streams and wetlands. People at the local level collectively take the responsibility for the initiative and “I” find a new job. Society understands the processes that must be *present* in order to provide and/or sustain the values we prize.

Riparian areas are recognized for their full range of values and are restored to their PFC across the Nation. Water stays on the land longer, our systems evolve to meet their potential, remain self-sustaining; and Phoenix/Las Vegas keeps their hands off of it *because of* society-wide value of healthy riparian systems. There will be no water wars. Watershed outcomes will be based on collaborative local efforts that produce abundant wildlife and fish, high quality water, sustainable services & systems, and adaptable, resilient communities.

Riparian restoration is effective, widespread & self-sustaining. It is economically viable, socially acceptable, & ecologically sustainable. The process becomes truly collaborative, riparian areas improve, traditional land uses and livelihoods are maintained for generations *because of* people working together on a common vision.

A comprehensive approach to riparian restoration and recovery is developed, understood and supported by our institutions and publics *and provides* established long term protocols that ensure continuation of riparian restoration efforts at all levels: field →international. This is not a one-point-in-time for-all-the-creeks approach. Coordination of agency, institution, organization effort *results in a* clear interagency vision that everyone understands and supports. *It will be a* collective effort by private, State, and Federal entities to improve, enhance/restore riparian/wetlands leading to functional sub-basin watersheds. Lasting partnerships continue to build upon the foundation already established, leading to an enhanced conservation ethic and restoring riparian areas beyond the band-aid fix.

There are long-term benefits to affected natural resources, “local” socioeconomic situations and inter/intra agency/public relations fostering successes of other

resource concerns. The public values healthy resource conditions and actively/positively manages their activities in sustainable ways *and* builds and expands on existing successes and progress toward restoring riparian areas and connecting watersheds using the collective knowledge and experience gained through collaboration – most successes begin with a success. Connected networks of healthy optimally functioning riparian ecosystems *spread* across the nation before it's too late. Riparian restoration is happening on the ground. Publics and user groups are fully engaged in the process ensuring effectiveness and efficiency with funds and resources.

Most or many riparian areas are eventually restored and/or maintained at optimal levels; social commitment has evolved/developed to insure continued future success. People will work together; good riparian management will become “catchy” *and* riparian areas will store water longer. *There will be* long-range riparian system health. The process will become self-sustaining and we will restore all the degraded streams and prevent future degradation *knowing* that it works and the health of the water catchments improves. *There will be a* balance of good physical condition of riparian systems with biological conditions and human values. Human relationships reflect this positive condition of riparian areas.

There will be* many successes, lessons from failures, “can do” attitude, *and a sense of community in tackling resource management and other problems; development of a land ethic, functioning and resilient streams, watersheds and communities.

Ecological and economic sustainability is achieved and sustainable. *There will be* harmony on the land among the various resource users *and* healthy functioning watersheds and the realization of most sustainable uses. All public and private entities will share the same vision as regards restoration and we have anadromous fish runs that make everybody happy. *There will be* more shade for cows and fish (if they behave themselves), *and* no more endangered species – aquatic, terrestrial, or human. Birds will sing, cows will graze, fish are abundant. People wonder why was there ESA and CWA? Lawyers will have to go back to ambulance chasing. None of us would need jobs in the field anymore. The birds would sing, the fish would swim, and all is right in the watershed.

.....In wildlife is the preservation of the world.

COLLECTIVE STATEMENT ON LONG-TERM STRATEGIES:

“What longer term strategies/actions does this group believe will help people nationally and globally to keep our water on the land longer?”

PROGRAM FUTURE

There is a Need to provide continued assistance to make sure that the program continues *and to* Expand activities geographically. *There is a need* to continue *and* (increase) state cadres, Move *to* east U.S. (state cadres, regional teams, & additional NRST in east/central U.S. Continue to broaden the NRST outreach to urban and international audiences. Move the concept of riparian health to the urban areas both nationally and globally. Develop large, corporate partners to fund work, education, etc., i.e., Chrysler, General Foods, etc.

Develop an interagency apprenticeship program in collaborative watershed management. Mentor new people/potential replacements.

EDUCATION

EDUCATION – we need to emphasize our freshwater vulnerability and our ties to the watershed. Educate, educate, educate. Develop an education plan, education and marketing. Develop *an* education and marketing plan. Develop a marketing plan. Ensure that watershed restoration is seen as a politically hot topic. *We need a* concerted intergovernmental, international education effort. Participate in education and conservation efforts with a water emphasis.

Develop modules and materials to educate our youth about watershed health and riparian values. Reach out to a younger audience: remember the BLM contracted out for a riparian tool kit for grades 5-8. It is in a second draft stage. Develop & integrate a K-12 curriculum on riparian management. Develop a comprehensive education approach for K-12 that models the process. *Note: Larry Schmidt indicated he intends to develop this K-12 model, using an existing model from Australia as a starting point*) Develop and investigate web clearinghouse on education programs and materials (short term?). Work with universities and colleges to develop a curriculum on cooperative riparian restoration management with emphasis on the social and relationship side of the strategy.

Educate and collaborate. Ingrain watershed restoration in the social psyche.

Restore a REAL connection to the land and personal responsibility to it as opposed to the Discovery Channel Syndrome. Take every opportunity to discuss the importance of freshwater resources with peers, friends, acquaintances, and family. Educate the public, in general, how a properly functioning stream collects, stores and slowly release water. Education *of* others of the importance of healthy catchments showcasing local successes and coaching others on Accelerated Cooperative Catchment Restoration *will help*.

DEALING WITH THE GLOBAL CRISIS

Economic stability precedes ecological stability. Bring population stabilization and education to the fore of political and social discussions @ all levels (local to global). Help meet basic human needs – food, clothing, shelter. Participate in international forums. Promote aquatic ecology as a basis for foreign aid.

Target economic and culturally appropriate opportunities. Promote literacy. Promote effective, efficient, affordable technology such as Coke bottle disinfections. {KISS}

Fund NRST travel to non-American countries to understand constraints & capabilities and characterize Leopold's water budget/deficit concept (W.E. is correct) Globally, become familiar with all existing efforts by governments, NGO's, UN, Peace Corps, etc. Find out their missions and activities and develop and implement ways of befriending, assisting, and partnering with them. Promote Aqua Corps concept.

COLLABORATION

Actively seek out watershed group efforts to interface w/ and participate in. “go to them” ---> join other agency/groups meetings to develop partnerships and collaborative actions. Engage the social science research cadre in evaluating and critiquing the process. Enhance the education/training offered by agencies and NRST to provide more social science and collaboration tools.

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

We should feature ACR/WRM that is watershed based with modular implementation. A goal is Watershed management that leaves more vegetation at a higher ecological status on uplands and riparian areas, Conservation of water resources and vegetation. Legislate watershed inventory and restoration as a primary purpose in natural resource agencies. Do something on the ground.

ECONOMIC VIABILITY

Work to insure Economic viability of resource industries.

P = Partnerships

F = Friends and Families

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Economic viability of restoration is important.

OTHER THOUGHTS

Rethink the attitude of some within FS of cutting down trees to provide municipal, irrigation and industrial water. Recognize the inherent conflict between agriculturists and engineers (hydro) who desire to get water off the land quickly – and aquatic “ologists” who seek the reverse. *In* Five years, *we* import Canadian effort that we exported in the '90, prophet/own country.

COLLECTIVE STATEMENT ON NEAR TERM ACTIONS.

“Based on the collective statements and discussions, what are the critical actions that we support as a group to take in the near term to help our creeks and communities?”

STRENGTHENING THE NETWORK EFFORTS

Work with interagency and publics to begin (*the initiative*) again. Keep up the good work. Build on existing tools. Preserve existing momentum of using PFC to effect ACRRM and Ensure quality control to minimize assessment errors. Do whatever is necessary to make sure the NRST continues and expand its sphere of influence. *Use a* Unified planning process and vocabulary. For agencies: discuss integration of the ACRRM with watershed management. Identify opportunities to integrate accelerated watershed and riparian improvement into ongoing and emerging initiatives, i.e., fire, clean water. Provide info to managers of program successes.

Do what's needed to get each state cadre what they need so that part of the “education” continues. Begin to move toward satellite groups to national team. Start with fire overhead team model as method of implementation. Develop technical/people (*collaborative people?*) groups to help and assist development and implementation of local plans. Develop a mentoring program for NRST. Mentor apprentices. Meet w/State and regional contacts to review new action items of the ACRRM to gain buy-in at the local level by 7/31.

Forest Service - Provide support for FS employees to be active members of State cadres. Provide funding so we can just go out and DO IT! Each person go home and duplicate Sandy Wyman's success in getting \$1/2 million riparian project started on the Big Sioux River using 319 funds.

COLLABORATION

Reach out to managers, user groups and local watershed groups by building relationships, providing education and demonstrating a willingness to listen. Reach out and invite/involve new partners as a part of the initiative. Emphasize education, communication, and collaboration. 1) Go the extra mile to involve mgt. in the ACRR, 2) then repeat w/public, 3) repeat #2. *Do* Community education, relationship building within the community. Become part of your community both locally and @ the level of your work. Build personal community relationships. Continue working with local watershed councils completing projects, creating budgets & working with local teachers. Get a group, do something. Go home and call the person you least want to talk to about riparian health. Build partnerships, stupid.

Develop interagency/interest group coalitions to discuss collaborative efforts to maintain or receive buy-in from agency heads by Sept. 1. *We should* Coordinate with F&WS, NMFS and make them a partner in the process. *I will* Work with my counterparts in BLM, FWS, NMFS, NRCS to develop strategies to just do it.

Refresh *remind?*) ID team, resource folks and management that riparian areas are still a focus and collaborative efforts with communities must be maintained.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Focus the discussion from this workshop into a do-able action plan with emphasis to on-the-ground results. Inform as many people as possible *about* the outcomes of this meeting. Synthesize meeting information and help carry action items forward.

Develop/refine a long term communications strategy for the ACRRM to reach our internal and external audiences. Develop a national marketing strategy for ACRRM. *Develop a* Marketing plan for expanding NRST & State cadre for ACRR. Assist by packaging the work being done on an existing project that incorporates a variety of initiatives and tools to be used for communication and marketing. Showcase success stories. *Do* Education and stick with program, Education: internal and external. . Develop an international workshop/symposium on ACRRM. Engage at local level to explain importance of cooperative, accelerated riparian restoration and management.

Keep spreading the word of ACRRM and PFC via workshops targeted toward private landowners, umm, that's fine. Move toward education of different groups about ACRRM/watersheds. Tell yourself that you can do it.

WATERSHED APPROACH

Coordinate watershed restoration efforts. Work at the watershed level at a spatial and societal scale. Think and plan at the watershed scale, Taking action on ACWR on a local level.

OTHER

I recommend That each person do what Russ did: Decide what we as individuals can do first on a broad scale, and secondly on a local scale to further A.C.R/WR&M. Do a Russ LaFayette.